

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----081816 250007Z /63
O 242321Z JUN 77
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4201

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USUN 2033

STADIS

EXDIS

FROM LOS DEL

FOR D/LOS - HODSOLL

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PLOS
SUBJECT: LOS - VISIT OF VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT PEREZ

REF: HODSOLL-OXMAN TELCON

1. SUMMARY. ROLE OF VENEZUELA IS IMPORTANT TO SUCCESS OF CONFERENCE. IT HOLDS THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF COMMITTEE 2, WHICH IS THE KEY TO PROTECTION OF US DEFENSE INTERESTS. VENEZUELAN DEL IS NOT REPEAT NOT BEING PARTICULARLY CONSTRUCTIVE ON PROCEDURE OR SUBSTANCE OF OUTSTANDING ISSUES. INFORMATION INDICATES THIS CONDUCT MAY BE PURSUANT TO HIGH LEVEL INSTRUCTIONS FROM CARACAS. AMB. RICHARDSON STRONGLY RECOMMENDS PRESIDENT CARTER AGREE TO VENEZUELAN PROPOSAL TO DISCUSS ISSUE WITH PRESIDENT PEREZ. AMB. RICHARDSON IS AVAILABLE TO PARTICIPATE, AND BELIEVES THIS WOULD BE HELPFUL AND WOULD INCREASE CHANCES OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S REMARKS HAVING DESIRED IMPACT HERE ON VENEZUELAN AND OTHERS AT CRITICAL JUNCTURE IN CONFERENCE. END
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SUMMARY.

2. BACKGROUND. AT THE END OF THE FIFTH WEEK OF ITS SCHEDULED 8 WEEKS, THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE LOS CONFERENCE IS AT A CRITICAL JUNCTURE. THE MAIN PROBLEM IS THAT STATES WILL NOT BE PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE A FINAL PACKAGE UNLESS THEY PERCEIVE THE FINAL MOMENT HAS ARRIVED AND HAVE

A VEHICLE THAT PERMITS NEGOTIATION ACROSS COMMITTEE LINES. WHILE SOME PROGRESS IS BEING MADE IN COMMITTEE 1 (DEEP SEABEDS) AND IN PLENARY ON DISPUTE SETTLEMENT, COMMITTEE 2 (CHAIRLED BY AMB. AGUILAR, HEAD OF THE VENEZUELAN DELEGATION) AND COMMITTEE 3 ARE STALLED. THUS, THE US IS NOT ABLE TO ACHIEVE NECESSARY CHANGES IN THE TEXT ON THE STATUS OF THE 200-MILE ECONOMIC ZONE (COMMITTEE 2), WHICH HAS MAJOR DEFENSE IMPLICATIONS, OR ON SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH (COMMITTEE 3). AGUILAR DOES NOT HIMSELF FAVOR HIGH SEAS STATUS FOR THE ECONOMIC ZONE.

3. THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE DESIRES TO PUT OUT A NEW CONSOLIDATED TEXT AS A VEHICLE FOR OVERALL NEGOTIATION OF OUTSTANDING ISSUES, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN. AMB. AGUILAR IS OPPOSING THIS UNLESS HE RECEIVES A VETO OVER ANY CHANGES IN THE COMMITTEE 2 TEXT. IN ADDITION, VENEZUELA IS TAKING A RADICAL LINE ON DEEP SEABED ISSUES. WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED BY FAIRLY RELIABLE SOURCES THAT AGUILAR (A MEMBER OF THE OPPOSITION PARTY) IS UNDER TIGHT REIN FROM CARACAS.

4. WE FIND THIS VENEZUELAN BEHAVIOR CURIOUS FOR SEVERAL REASONS:

(A) ONCE COMPLETED, THE TREATY WILL BE SIGNED IN CARACAS. THIS IS CERTAINLY A MAJOR POLITICAL PLUS FOR THEM.
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(B) AS AN OIL EXPORTER, VENEZUELA SHOULD SHARE OUR CONCERN ABOUT THE ADVERSE EFFECTS ON NAVIGATION OF NO TREATY.

(C) IF VENEZUELA IS FEARFUL OF ANTAGONIZING OTHER LATINS, BY PUTTING OUT A TEXT THAT ACCOMMODATES US ON THE STATUS OF THE ECONOMIC ZONE, LETTING CONFERENCE PRESIDENT AMER-SENGHE TAKE OVER WOULD TAKE THEM OFF THE HOOK.

(D) VENEZUELA DOES NOT HAVE MAJOR INTERESTS IN DEEP SEABED MANGANESE NODULES. IT IS NOT A SIGNIFICANT LAND PRODUCER OF NICKEL OR COPPER AND, DESPITE CANADIAN STIMULATED HOPES, IS UNLIKELY TO BECOME ONE.

(E) VENEZUELA DOUBTLESSLY RECOGNIZES THAT A TREATY WITHOUT US AND OTHER MAJOR POWER RATIFICATION WOULD NOT MEAN VERY MUCH.

5. POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS OF VENEZUELAN BEHAVIOR ARE:

(A) VENEZUELA IS EMPHASIZING THIRD-WORLD LEADERSHIP GOALS OVER ACHIEVEMENT OF A TREATY. LIKE SOME ARABS, IT

FEELS IT NECESSARY TO OPPOSE THE MAJOR POWERS TO PRE-SERVE ITS THIRD-WORLD CREDENTIALS.

(B) VENEZUELA DOES NOT FEAR A COLLAPSE OF THE CONFERENCE, WHICH COULD BE BLAMED PRIMARILY ON THE US AND US MINING LEGISLATION. THIS MIGHT MEAN A HEIGHTENED NORTH-SOUTH CONFRONTATION WHICH COULD OPEN NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR VENEZUELAN LEADERSHIP OR FOR OPEC.

(C) VENEZUELA DOES NOT BELIEVE THE US COULD OR WOULD REJECT A TREATY IN THE LAST ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF THE REMAINING OUTSTANDING ISSUES.

6. OBJECTIVES. WE WOULD HOPE THE PRESIDENT COULD PERSUADE
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PRESIDENT PEREZ THAT:

(A) VENEZUELA HAS A MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY FOR ASSURING THE SUCCESS OF THE CONFERENCE.

(B) IF THIS SESSION DOES NOT END WITH SUBSTANTIAL AGREEMENT ON THE MAJOR OUTSTANDING ISSUES, THE CHANCES FOR A TREATY ARE SLIM.

(C) SUCCESS IS WITHIN REACH; A FINAL TREATY COULD BE READY IN ONE MORE SESSION FOR SIGNATURE IN CARACAS IN MID-1978.

(D) THE US DOES NOT HAVE MUCH FLEXIBILITY LEFT. IF THERE IS TO BE A TREATY WE CAN RATIFY, THERE MUST BE A REASONABLE ACCOMODATION ON DEEP SEABEDS, LEGAL STATUS OF THE ECONOMIC ZONE AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH.

(E) MAJOR VENEZUELAN COMMUNICATION LINES RUN THROUGH FOREIGN 200-MILE ZONES. WITHOUT A TREATY NOW SECURING NAVIGATION AND OVERFLIGHT, THE FREE USE OF THOSE COMMUNICATION LINES IS LIKELY TO BE PREJUDICED OVER TIME IF, AS SEEMS LIKELY, COASTAL STATES EXPAND THE NATURE OF THEIR CLAIMS IN THE ECONOMIC ZONE.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 USUN 2033

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EXDIS

FROM LOS DEL

FOR D/LOS - HODSOLL

(F) HE SHOULD INSTRUCT AMB. AGUILAR TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO PROMOTE AGREEMENT AT THIS SESSION ON OUTSTANDING ISSUES THAT CAN BE BROADLY ACCEPTED, AND TO WORK WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE TO THAT END.

7. SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS:

(1) SIGNATURE OF A LAW OF THE SEA TREATY IN CARACAS, PERHAPS NEXT YEAR, WOULD BE THE GREATEST STEP FORWARD IN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION SINCE THE FOUNDING OF THE UN.

(2) TIME IS RUNNING OUT. SO MUCH HAS BEEN AGREED ALREADY THAT IT WOULD BE TRAGIC TO LOOSE A TREATY OVER THE FEW REMAINING ISSUES. YET IF SUBSTANTIAL AGREEMENT ON A NEW TEXT IS NOT REACHED IN THE NEXT 3 WEEKS IN NEW YORK, THE CHANCES FOR A TREATY FOR YEARS TO COME ARE VERY SLIM. THE CONSEQUENCE WOULD BE HEIGHTENED NORTH-SOUTH TENSIONS, INCREASING FOREIGN INTERFERENCE WITH US AND VENEZUELAN COMMUNICATION LINES ON AND OVER THE SEAS,
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AND A FURTHER LOSS OF CONFIDENCE IN GLOBAL INSTITUTIONS. MANY IN THE US WOULD CITE FAILURE AS EVIDENCE THAT EFFORTS AT COOPERATION AND ACCOMODATION ARE FUTILE.

(3) WORLD LEADERS LIKE PRESIDENT PEREZ HAVE RESPONSIBILITY TO WORK FOR SUCCESS.

IT SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD THAT A TREATY CANNOT SERVE ITS PURPOSE UNLESS IT IS ACCEPTABLE TO IMPORTANT MARITIME

COUNTRIES AS WELL AS DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. SINCE VENEZUELA HOLDS THE CHAIR OF ONE OF THE 3 CONFERENCE COMMITTEES, ITS ROLE IS CRUCIAL.

(4) IT IS CLEAR THAT DELEGATES WILL NOT GO THE EXTRA STEP UNLESS THEY PERCEIVE THAT THE MOMENT OF DECISION HAS ARRIVED. THUS, WHAT WE MUST DO IS PUT THE MAJOR OUTSTANDING ISSUES OF THE CONFERENCE INTO A PACKAGE, AND FORCE THE KEY DELEGATES TO SOLVE THEM. PROBABLY ONLY THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE HAS THE MORAL AUTHORITY TO DO THIS, AND HE CAN ONLY DO IT WITH ACTIVE VENEZUELAN SUPPORT.

(5) THE THREE KEY PROBLEMS ARE A REGIME FOR DEEP SEABED MINING, THE LEGAL STATUS OF THE 200-MILE ECONOMIC ZONE, AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE US WOULD BE ABLE TO RATIFY A TREATY UNLESS OUR DIFFICULTIES ON THESE ISSUES ARE ACCOMMODATED, AND WE BELIEVE THAT SUCH ACCOMMODATION WOULD ALSO BENEFIT VENEZUELA.

(6) THE TIME HAS COME FOR US TO ENSURE THAT A MECHANISM EXISTS THAT CAN PRODUCE SUBSTANTIAL SUCCESS BY THE END OF THE CURRENT SESSION, AND WE SHOULD INSTRUCT OUR DELEGATIONS TO WORK ACTIVELY WITH EACH OTHER TO THIS END.

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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